
SCHOOL COUNCIL DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING
Monday, March 30, 2020
11-1230 p.m.

Present: S. Bondy (Chair), F. Miller (Co-Chair), A. Sriharan, A. Banerjee, A. Sass-Kortsak, A. Benoit, A. Siddiqi, A. Laporte, B. Poland, C. Richardson, C. Strike, C. McGovern, D. Grace, D. Gesink, D. Willison, E. Sokoloff, E. Seto, E. Di Ruggiero, G. Anderson, H. Manson, J. Brooks, J. M. Bell, J. Scott, J. Kotsopoulos, J. McLaughlin, K. Thorpe, K. Kollias, L. Ceolin, M. Dobrow, N. Sheppard Jones, P. Kauffman, P. Bozek, R. Kustra, R. Deber, R. Copes, R. Hancock-Howard, R. Schwartz, R. Timothy, R. Hurst, R. Schmidt, S. Ahmad, S. Ko, S. Richter, S. Fadel, S. Brown, S. Greco, T. Panzarella, V. Arrandale, V. Lui, W. Lou, X. Wei, M. Galicia (Recording Secretary)

1. Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first online meeting of Council, and reminded everyone to log in with their real names to determine attendance/quorum. For items for approval in the agenda, the Chair requested folks to indicate agreement with a virtual hand raise.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved: Jennifer Brooks **Seconded** Daniel Grace **THAT** the agenda be approved.
Carried.

3. Approval of Minutes, March 30, 2020

Sue Bondy asked if there are any corrections from anyone with regard to the minutes. There were no hands raised in the chat. no questions. Minutes were unanimously approved.
Carried.

4. Business Arising

DrPH

Associate Dean, Academic Affairs informed the Council that the DrPH program was approved by the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance. Recruitment is expected to commence in the Fall with a first cohort starting September 2021. A big 'thank you' to Erica Di Ruggiero and Nancy Baxter and everyone else who helped make this happen.

No questions were raised.

Undergraduate program Dean Brown reminded folks that the DLSPH academic plan included a plan to explore an undergraduate option and create a full life cycle of teaching. It was thought that an undergraduate program would drive a significant amount of revenue. It also might create a great pipeline for super graduate students and allow the School to have significant impact and meet the

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School's vision. The work that a number of folks contributed to this did not provide the results envisioned. This was revisited in the recent while which involved talking to people at UTSC, Engineering and most recently to University College which is home to the Health Studies Program. Given the present pandemic situation, any progress will take a bit more time. That said, University College would really like to collaborate more closely with DLSPH on this program which we will continue to explore. Steini is currently teaching HST211.

No questions were raised.

5. New Business

Practicum experiences during and plans after COVID-19

ADAA Dionne Gesink provided the following update

DLSPH has a number of practical programs across the school in all the different divisions and units. Currently, students who are able to participate in a remote practicum are able to do so going forward. The in-person practicums are on hold until April 6, with the possibility of an extension because of COVID-19. Several of the practicums have gotten cancelled causing in a bit of a panic for some students, but there are new ones opening up. Dionne's office is actively working on several plan Bs and exploring different practicum options.

One of the things being looked into is how to plan for first year MPH or MPH students that are in a two-year program. Students will have the option to meet their practical requirement in the second year which means that they may or may not have a gap in terms of credits this summer.

Another option is they do not take anything this summer and then take a second practicum next year in the summer term for which they would not necessarily pay additional fees, but which will extend their graduation to November instead of June.

One program in IHPME and Nutrition have been impacted and are calling a disruption

There is a placement group that includes program leads and the people responsible for practicum placements who are in constant communication to keep these moving forward, in a timely way.

Sue Bondy added that in order for students to maintain student visa status, they must be registered in one activity which could be .5 credits. Any questions relating to this must be directed to Dionne or the appropriate program director or practicum coordinator.

Ellen Sokoloff commented via chat to clarify part-time registration. Students only pay for summer if they were not registered in both fall and winter. If they were registered for fall and winter, they do not pay summer fees either.

Questions/Discussion:

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Blake Poland offered thanks to all who have stepped into roles during this time, Dionne, in particular, who is having a “baptism by fire”. And followed with a question on what courses are offered in the spring and summer.

Summer courses will be offered remotely. And faculty who are planning a course this summer are encouraged to also plan on a continuity backup--which could be a person or a system that can replace them, if they get sick. This might mean co-teaching or having pre-recorded lectures.

The Center for Teaching Solutions and Innovation (CTSI) has several online resources; organized group sessions around how to make online teaching more feasible and sustainable to meet course needs can also be arranged.

Also being figured out is the *actual* versus *perceived* need for practicum placements. Students have been informed that new courses to be offered will be posted on April 20. Registration opens April 1 and closes May 4.

Faculty whose research have been suspended and who have time to teach elective courses that would be added as new courses are encouraged to teach. Dionne added that this is not ongoing nor a regular expectation, and it is only for this summer to fill a transitory need.

On the process of approval, faculty may take the same route of seeking approval as one would for a reading course, using an online form.

Paul Bozek as Chair of Education Committee provided the following comments/information.

The Education Committee from a governance point of view is operating remotely. Any new course outside of a reading course or any significant change to an existing course that would require approval beyond the graduate curriculum committee by the Education Committee to be fully approved as a minor change can be done remotely, can be done off cycle. The Education Committee will not hold meetings at set intervals if the need is potentially great to do some quick changes that require governance approvals. The current Constitution of the Council allows for these.

Minor changes such as program changes to an individual field of a particular field already approved; what courses are mandatory, what electives might be available can be done by the Education Committee after coming through your graduate curriculum committee. On an off cycle basis with electronic voting or if it's questionable as to why changes are needed Zoom meetings will be conducted.

On the other hand, reading courses and directed reading courses or directed research can be reviewed/approved through the graduate curriculum committee without going through formal governance. So this can be done with one off courses with some students for the summer to fulfill the requirement to keep students registered or giving them electives.

Sue Bondy also added that there is lots of flexibility and people are really being generous with their time and energy to come up with solutions to keep students on path.

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7. Standing Items

a. Education Committee

Paul Bozek introduced the minor modification courses that were approved in the March 9, 2020 Education Committee meeting, which are forwarded to Council for information only.

1. Change to Existing Courses

- a) Change to existing course: CHL5920H – regular to continuous (Jeremy Scott)
- b) Course name change – CHL5904H (Jeremy Scott)
- c) Course name change – CHL5912H (Jeremy Scott)

2. New Courses

- a) CHL5656Y Nutrition & Dietetics Culminating Project (P Buklis) – governance form and syllabus

3. Change to Existing Programs

- a) GRE – remove as admission requirement for MPH Epi (D Fisman)
- b) MPH OEH – changes to program requirements (P Bozek)
- c) MPH Nutrition & Dietetics – changes to program requirements (P Buklis)
- d) MPH Nutrition & Dietetics Advanced Standing – changes to program requirements (P Buklis)
- e) MPH Health Promotion – changes to program requirements (C Strike)

4. New Programs

- a) MPH Nutrition & Dietetics – New Emphases: Clinical Nutrition & Public Health Nutrition (P Buklis)

There were no questions raised.

b. CAO Update

Robin Hurst, provided update on ensuring that the staff had a computer at home to work from home (during the pandemic) that they could connect to VPN. Some laptops were repurposed to be taken home to allow for business continuity around HR.

Teams have also been established through Microsoft Teams to keep communications and to see how things are moving forward.

The second biggest piece was to get all courses online for the rest of the term, in a very quick manner. A number of zoom licenses were purchased to be made available to all faculty. Robin offered thanks to Obadiah George who has graciously helped to onboard faculty around zoom. Positive feedback was received on this item.

Robin is part of an operation continuity table under the office of Scott Mabury (VP Operations) that meets each week. One of the crucial things is limiting access to the building and to allow access to essential folks. Everyone is working remotely during the lockdown and no one should be in the building. If one has to enter the building to pick up files needed to perform one's work, they

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do so by isolating themselves from others and leave. Robin reported that on the occasions that she was in the building, she saw two or three people who were also practicing social distancing.

The University also has instituted a disinfecting program in the evenings. They are not doing the wet labs as there may be chemicals that are not suitable at this time.

FOBs should work for faculty and staff in the buildings they are entitled to enter.

c. Dean's Update

Convocation has been cancelled. There is a petition to keep convocation in some fashion. The University is trying to figure out how to deal with this. Dean will keep folks updated, at the same time the Dean reminded everyone to subscribe to the Provost's Digest (sent by email). It is a good vehicle to get consistent news from the University.

Equity and Diversity – The School spent a bit of looking at what it will do to promote equity, diversity and inclusion. Steini reminded that they looked into an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion officer, but could not find the right fit not because no one is suitable. It is an impossible position to fill. At the next faculty meeting the Dean will be bringing forward four positions that are kind of equity leads within particular groups. He will talk about the why's and what those jobs look like.

Community Engagement- Outreach & Access is going on despite the fact that high schools are cancelled and are trying to move online. He encouraged folks to think about how we deal with community engagement and support faculty who are doing that,

The Dean reiterated thanks to Erica Di Ruggiero for the work done on DrPH.

He also thanked everyone for bearing patiently and working through the pandemic situation and reminded everyone to be safe.

Sue reminded Steini to introduce new leadership- Dionne Gesink as ADAA. Steini thanked Dionne for the impressive work she has done since she took on the role two weeks prior to this Council meeting.

Sue informed the Council that France Gagnon was just about ending her class and maybe delayed so she called on Dionne Gesink for her update which follows.

d. ADAA Updates

Dionne Gesink updated that grading deadline moved to May 15: students who want to graduate in June need to have their recommendation for graduation by April 17; grades for those who are not graduating can be submitted at a later date.

Dionne added that the communication on this will be sent out ASAP to help prioritize marking for the graduating students.

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School of Graduate Studies has an online self declaration of illness form. It started out to be something that SGS was using to keep track of COVID- related absences, but they've expanded it to include non-COVID related absences as well.

Students are not only having physical health problems, but they're starting to have a lot of mental health and emotional health problems. Faculty are encouraged to be more compassionate and as accommodating as is possible.

Voting update- situations such as changes to courses requiring a vote in the last two weeks of classes can still be done. Some flexibility is allowed in submitting requests- faculty are being informed that a request for disruption may be used and still take a vote. Dionne will send out the form to be completed.

Summer courses- Dionne will find out the volume of students and the number of courses possibly needed for the summer to help faculty make decisions on whether or not to offer courses they normally offer. For new courses, Dionne will confer with Steini on how to manage this with workload.

Dionne mentioned that the University is starting to see more student complaints of harassment within classes which may or may not have to do with COVID-19. Folks are reminded to make sure they are aware of these and ensure modelling inclusion and diversity and that the students are doing so as well.

Students' financial concerns- a lot of students are concerned about finances and the extension of their program. A document has been put together that outlines information on needs-based emergency funds.

Students may contact Ellen at the Grad Office and to contact Dionne for teaching concerns.

Sue reminded folks about a memo that Robin sent around with information on point people for specific questions/issues.

While a search for a graduate coordinator is ongoing, all reading course proposals will go to Dionne.

At the request/comment from Blake Poland, Steini provided an update on how the School is positioning itself in the COVID-19 related work *in the provincial level*.

- Modelling that is being used to support what's going on in government right now is being done, one way or the other by our students or faculty.
- Webinar on COVID-19 that was well-subscribed
- Faculty coming up with several relevant research that will be helpful on how we respond and how we recover from the pandemic. Social determinants of health, how we deal with rapid policy synthesis.
- Around the provincial and federal command tables are our faculty, epidemiologists and modellers

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- Overall, several of our faculty are engaged in modelling work, synthesis work, research. A lot of our grads making good decisions are at the command table.

Steini stated that the School has to make sure that it is responding and being supportive to the system, connecting the right people and setting up tables to bring together useful input to the decision makers and present their modeling work.

The second way is how to cope with students and coming up with options and opportunities for our students to contribute through this pandemic and meet their academic requirements.

Looking beyond COVID-19: How do we position ourselves after this? How do we get ready to learn from this? How do we bring proposals to donors?

e. ADR Updates

There's a lot of action for research on COVID-19. Opportunities abound from the Ontario government. Folks are encouraged to look at the research alert that was sent out from the Research office; as well to connect with the Office of Research Services for any questions.

8. Membership of School Council- Sue mentioned that between now and the next meeting, the process of filling out vacancies (through a remote fashion) will be repeated for the next academic year.

9. Update from Student Associations

Sarah Richter MPH, provided the following update:

- a. Action Oriented Retreat, (essentially a mass town hall for all students and faculty within DLSPH) which would have been held today, MARCH 30, but had to cancel.

Student feedback on what's working really well:

- They really enjoyed tutorials which are very beneficial for our time.
- A lot of faculty have gone out of their way to make themselves available to students and have made some material available online.
- Some students in the MPH stream are able to enroll in introductory EPI and Biostats.
- PhD students are able to take some courses outside of DLSPH and they've had more support for student-run initiatives.

Constructive items:

- Funding for fellowship conferences and publications
 - Greater and more specialized professional development opportunities. (Special thanks to Sarah Ko for her support and great collaboration work)
- b. Student response to COVID-19

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Knowledge Translation group – putting a lot of work with support from faculty and staff. They have created infographics and myth busters, summarizing some articles, whether pre- or published, writing op-eds with newspapers and websites in the City, an op-ed in the Varsity's last print highlighting the group. Sharing some of what's been done on social media.

From the chat room: Vincci Lui – Librarian: *Thanks for sharing, will take a closer look and share in the Gerstein library's research info guide in mythbusters section.*

The students are also formally calling themselves the Infectious Disease Working Group (created during the Ebola outbreak in the recent past) as they want to continue working past COVID. Instagram handle: @infectious_info

Nicolas Sheppard-Jones (PHPM Resident) shared thoughts of appreciation for the efforts that have gone into accommodating the diverse needs in response to COVID-19. And a word of thanks to health care providers redeployed and called back to clinical duties.

More from the chat messages:

Raise Deber: Who to direct media inquiries- response: Communications Office would be the point of contact.

Shaza Fadel- I wanted to share that one of the MPH (Hashim Khan) students is a co- chair of a national covid response task force for Canadian Muslims. another great contribution from students

Sue also wished to add the Acknowledgement. Dionne offered an unofficial version:

I do know that we are on the land of the Haudenosaunee, the Huron-Wendat, the Anishnawbe, and the Mississaugas. And it really is a privilege to be on this land and to do this work and to all gather together.

Sue also read from Ellen Sokoloff's message on chat.

I (we) wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 1217 pm with word of thanks from anyone who has contributed.

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